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Bulgaria

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

New Import Certificates for Animal Products

2001

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Report Highlights:

The Bulgarian Government deadline for bilingual import certificates for animal products has been postponed from October 1, 2001 to March 1, 2002. However, new import certificates (based on the EU model) might be required after this date. Current estimate for U.S. poultry and meat exports to Bulgaria for CY2001 is for \$10 million, which is the highest over the last five years.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Sofia[BU1], BU

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New Veterinary Import Requirements Introduced

On September 26, the Bulgarian Vet Service issued a new regulation (Ordinance #RD09-937) which canceled two previous regulations on imports of products and feed of animal origin (Ordinance #RD09-267/February 23, 2001 and Ordinance #RD 09-600/May 9, 2001).

With the new regulations, the deadline for introduction of bilingual import certificates is postponed from October 1, 2001 to March 1, 2002. In addition to the requirements for a bilingual form of import certificates, the Bulgarian Vet Service will require a different form of import certificates. Special approval is required by the Vet Service of these new forms for each country. The newly required forms are largely based on EU import certificates. A translated text of the new regulation is attached.

According to the Bulgarian Vet Service, this new requirement reflects the introduction of the EU regulations in the area of agricultural trade. Local veterinary officials are interested in more detailed information on various animal diseases and plant inspection measures as listed in the EU certificates.

Trade

Bulgaria is a growing export market for U.S. pork and poultry meat. U.S. exports have been increasing gradually over the last 5 years to reach record high figures for the first six months of 2001. The official statistical data (source: U.S. customs) in the first six months of CY2001 show \$6.0 million trade in poultry (frozen chicken cuts and turkey cuts) and \$1.3 million in red meats, mainly frozen pork cuts, which triples the level of trade compared to CY2000. The actual trade figures (estimated by the AgOffice) are roughly double the above officially registered shipments.

New Trade Regime in CY2002

The local MinAg and MinEconomy in cooperation with local producers/processors associations are in the process of preparing the new trade regime for CY2002. A shortage of meat on the market has forced the local Meat Processors Association to officially request an increase in duty free or reduced duty import quotas. The Association is insisting on a 9,000 MT duty free import quota for pork and 12,000 MT duty free import quota for turkey meat regardless of the origin. In addition, there is a request for reduction in import duties for beef (to 3% and 5%); and unlimited duty free imports of pork fat and pork offal for processing. These quotas are requested on the top of the EU import quotas under their "double zero" agreement (7,000 MT for pork and 1,000 MT for poultry and processed products).

Attachment: New Regulation

Ordinance #RD09-937

Sofia

September 26, 2001

Based on Art.3 and in connection with Art.44 of the Veterinary Law, I order

1. Considered from March 1, 2002, imports in Republic of Bulgaria of:

- fresh meat from pigs, cattle, sheep, goats and poultry;
- one day age chicken;
- fish products;
- intestine of animal origin;
- gelatin received from heat processed animal raw materials for human consumption;
- processed protein from animal origin for human consumption;
- eggs and egg products for human consumption;
- breeding eggs;
- heat processed milk or dairy products, produced from heat processed milk;
- grain feed, flours of animal or crop origin, meals and other feed components;
- hides, wool, hair and other technical raw materials of animal origin;
- pet food in hermetically closed hard metal packaging, semi dry or dry pet foods,

are allowed upon a condition that each shipment is accompanied by a veterinary certificate approved by the Chief Office of the National Veterinary Medical Service.

2. Imports of products and raw materials, subject of veterinary medical control, not described in Art.1, are allowed, with a veterinary certificate for each shipment issued by the country of origin, meeting the veterinary medical import requirements and with a text in Bulgarian language.

Until January 1, 2002, the General Director of the National Veterinary Medical Service should prove examples of vet certificates for imports of live animals.

The current Ordinance cancels the Ordinance #RD 09-267 of February 23, 2001 and Ordinance #RD 09-600 of May 9, 2001.

Signed by Minister of Agriculture M.Dikme

